

THIS ISSUE

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SPASTICS NEWS

MARCH 1967 PRICE 6d THE MAGAZINE OF THE SPASTICS SOCIETY



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SPASTICS NEWS

The magazine of The Spastics Society

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Front Cover Picture: A happy picture of a happy couple wed recently at Carbrooke, in Norfolk. The groom is Mr. Stanley Riches (Sec. of Norwich '62 Club) and his bride is Miss Josephine Taylor, who is slightly spastic but deaf and dumb. They met at the Norwich Work Centre where Stanley is a clerk.

THE SPASTICS SOCIETY

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'Catch your spastic as a baby . . .'

Dr. R. J. Derham, M.B., M.R.C.S., D.P.H., D.C.H., who works at Alder Hey and Olive Mount Hospitals in Liverpool that have 990 beds for children of all ages, here records his impressions of a visit to C.P. Centres in Berne and Florence

IT WAS BY ACCIDENT, and not through devotion to the subject of handicapped children, that I found myself working with spastic children. With the introduction of the N.H.S. in 1948, it was put in my contract that I should pay regular visits to Greenbank Lane Special Residential School, in Liverpool, where there were 20 C.P. children. From weekly visits to this school, from attending many conferences and from visiting many centres in this country and in the U.S.A., I learnt about educable spastic and athetoid children. Ten years ago I started a day assessment centre at Alder Hey to diagnose and help younger children, including those who might not be educable at school.

Much of my own time is spent with sick children, mostly babies with pneumonia or gastro-enteritis and I spend two days a week working with cerebral palsy.

300 Assessments

About 300 children with cerebral palsy have now been assessed at my centre. Most of these were from Merseyside but some came from other parts of Lancashire or Cheshire. Besides assessment, those who are able to benefit from treatment receive help from two occupational therapists and the part-time services of a physiotherapist. Speech therapy has usually been available and I have had access to all the special departments of a large children's hospital for detailed assessment of vision, hearing, intelligence and orthopaedic aspects.

Some time ago, the late Director of The Spastics Society asked me to give a paper at a Bristol conference on the treatment of very early cerebral palsy. This was difficult because not all cerebral palsy is recognisable in infancy and only about one child in four or five reaches me under the age of one year. I compromised by reviewing the last 100 children referred to the assessment at Alder Hey and was quite startled to find that one-third of them were so severely handicapped, both mentally and physically, as to be untreatable by any recognised methods. It was also apparent that, at my clinic, the proportion of these severely handicapped children had increased with-

in the past few years; I believe this to be due to the resuscitation of babies in our maternity hospitals who would have died five years ago, usually because of lack of oxygen in the blood going to the brain.

At the same Bristol meeting, Dr. Elizabeth Köng gave a paper telling of the work that she is doing in Berne in Switzerland. Dr. Köng, who is known internationally, made the astounding assertion that she very rarely sees a child with severe cerebral palsy. This seemed to imply that treatment in Berne cured such cases. At the same meeting, Professor Milani of Florence gave a very complicated paper which dealt with early recognition of cerebral palsy as well as early treatment.

The results in Berne and Florence seemed to be so much better than those in this country that it was arranged that a party of paediatricians and physiotherapists should visit those two continental cities. We went early in 1966.

The most obvious thing that emerged was the magnificent ancillary staffing in both Berne and Florence. Physiotherapists abound: indeed they came to Berne from all parts of Europe to learn Dr. Köng's methods: the head of her team is an English woman who went to Berne for a year and is now staying indefinitely. In Florence, Professor Milani has no less than 13 physiotherapists whereas, in Liverpool, I think I am lucky if I have one.

The key to the continental argument is this—catch your spastic as a small baby, treat him with expert and highly trained physiotherapists and the disability will be minimal by the time he is five years old.

I must pay tribute to the very skilled manner in which these therapists handle their babies, but it is difficult to reconcile sweeping claims with the established fact that the average I.Q. of all children with cerebral palsy is only 65 and a third of them are later found to be unsuitable for school by reason of mental subnormality.

In my own series, an appreciable number are so retarded that they do not recognise people, perhaps not even their own mothers. If these children are found

in Liverpool, why are they not found in Berne and Florence? I think that the answer is that they are alive somewhere in both Berne and Florence but they do not come to these highly specialised treatment centres and are, to some extent, hidden.

I believe that both Elizabeth Köng and Professor Milani have established that early treatment does help the intelligent child, but I do not think that they have established that early treatment will raise low intelligence or make a grossly retarded child treatable.

Professor Milani advanced my thoughts further. He took us to a convent where a number of illegitimate babies are, as it were, posted through a hole in the wall (there is no adoption in Italy) so that the mother probably loses sight of them for ever. They were shown to us in lines of cribs, rather like little bright pink vegetables set out in orderly, neat rows. This is not inhuman because the staff at the convent do everything they can for these babies and they are devoted women.

Illegitimate Babies

It is well recognised that there is a high proportion of mental subnormality, and of cerebral palsy, amongst illegitimate babies—presumably the stresses laid upon the mother during pregnancy account for this. It, therefore, happens that such convents, as the one we saw in Florence, have a large number of babies with early cerebral palsy and mental subnormality. Since the babies arrive within a few weeks of birth, they are continuously observed and diagnosed very early. Professor Milani has built up, out of his own vast experience of these babies, a whole system of helping those who are quite badly handicapped mentally, or mentally and physically, to walk. He is, in fact, treating many that we would consider untreatable and has trained his physiotherapists to use large beachballs to encourage reflexes which will make the baby first crawl and then toddle. Hard-bitten paediatricians watching him were immensely impressed: we all felt sure that he is helping the helpless in a way that we are not doing in this country.

Children who are very backward mentally, and who are cared for in modern

hospital units do make progress: many who have never walked are able to get about eventually. Some form of treatment should be even more worthwhile when there is a double handicap, as in severe cerebral palsy. Of course I know that some children are too badly handicapped for any form of therapy and, faced with such problems, it is always a marvel to me that more parents do not break down under the strain of caring for a completely helpless child.

In my experience it is rare for a parent to reject the child either openly or without realising that the rejection is taking place. What abnormal lives these parents must lead! Surely there is scope for some voluntary organisation to provide home helps, or child sitters, so that the parents of the severely handicapped can, at least, get out in the evenings. I am sure that this is being done in some parts of the country but I do not think that much is done about it in Liverpool, where the welfare services and voluntary organisations are fully extended already.

One has to face up to the fact that more and more very frail babies are being resuscitated after stormy times immediately following birth. They are being kept alive, whereas five years ago they would have died. Quite a proportion of these babies are later found to have cerebral palsy and I believe that the incidence of severe handicaps is increasing compared with the mild handicaps. We shall certainly have to make provision for these children and later, for the adolescents and adults who follow. Therapists, specially trained to work with such handicaps are the greatest need and this is certainly a requirement which is hardly being met in my area. Perhaps the situation is better in other parts of the country. I hope it is.

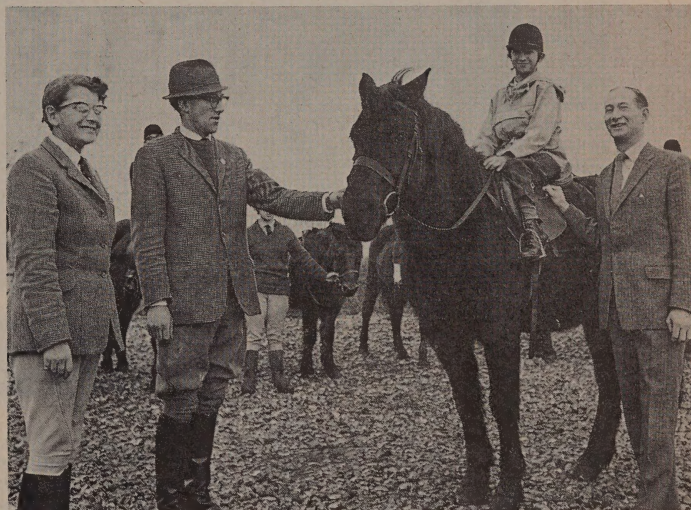
The experts in both Florence and Berne stressed that very early referral of the C.P. baby is vital. Elizabeth Kōng showed us a child who had been first sent to her at eight months and told us that he had come too late. To carry out her plans we must not only find and train the physiotherapists but we must also get the patients to the treatment centres while they are still small babies. This may be possible with spastics, who can usually be recognised in infancy, but, in my experience, it is very difficult in athetoids (those with involuntary movements) as the clinical picture may not be typical until after the first birthday.

The plan, therefore, is to follow up all babies in whom some developmental abnormality may be anticipated from family, pregnancy or birth factors. A mammoth task in a place the size of Liverpool. We have made a start, but, as yet, are only at the beginning.



(Courtesy: Oldham Evening Chronicle)

£350 FOR OLDHAM: A free buffet was provided at the opening of the new restaurant, Parkfield House, Moorside, by the proprietors, Mr. and Mrs. Eric Mellor, seen with Mr. H. Warburton, Mr. Alan Wood, Ald. and Mrs. H. Kenny, Mayor and Mayoress of Oldham, and Mr. and Mrs. Roy Stanley (Chairman, Oldham Spastics Development Association)



(Courtesy: Sevenoaks Chronicle)

A PONY FOR DELARUE: Mr. D. G. Fellgate, director of the Bradbourne Riding School, seen with 13-year-old Dean Youngman on Shackleton, a brown pony presented to the School by Miss P. M. Barnes (left), through the Advisory Council on Riding for the Disabled, Mr. G. Tudor (right)

COLCHESTER CHRISTMAS CARD SHOP: Mr. Hawkins kindly lent the group his premises for the sale of Christmas cards, where they did a thriving trade

(Photo: James Slack)



Impressions of Sherrards

by The Editor



CHRISTMAS DINNER: The Trainees 'dig in'. They also organised a Christmas party in the Civic Centre, Welwyn, of a buffet dinner and cabaret. Eight Trainees also took part in a presentation of 'Scrooge' and some musical items

I VISITED Sherrards on Wednesday, November 30th, 1966, on a cold and windy day.

This was the pioneer effort of The Spastics Society in training the disabled for work in open employment. Purchased in 1957, new accommodation and workshops have been erected in the ground surrounding the original Victorian block. There are normally between 60 and 70 trainees in residence but two or three day trainees also come to the works, although it is preferred to have everyone boarding. Their ages range between 17 and 30.

The works manager, Mr. Wilfred Jones, who is also responsible for preliminary assessment of the trainees on arrival, finds that the age group 20-22 is the most hopeful for assimilation into factory life. The mental age group of the 15-17's is usually so much less than their physical age (he considers almost half) that they cannot cope with the problems. This may be partly because of over-protection in home life, or at a previous residential centre and also a lack of realistic appreciation of what a job really entails.

At Sherrards, the actual conditions in

light industry are carried out as practically as possible—everybody clocks in in the usual manner; work sheets are kept and productivity capacity is observed. Although the trainees reach Sherrards after assessment by the Society's officers (psychological, social workers, etc.) Mr. Jones spends the first fortnight or so, assessing them for their suitability for training. It should not be forgotten that, for many, the six months spent at Sherrards represents a last chance for them to achieve any kind of independence. For the older ones, therefore, who have the prospect of losing their parents in a measurable time, there must be a certain mental strain as well.

Entrants are divided into three streams: 1, engineering; 2, woodwork; and 3, commercial (typing and office work); the majority find their way into the engineering stream. They join the shifts, working in the airy, well-lit and fully-equipped machine shop. Mr. Curtis is in charge and he has five assistants on the shop floor. As far as possible, the contracts sought are for local and other firms which involve runs of at least a thousand, which

are completed in batches of one hundred when ready.

When I visited the works, there was an interruption in the contract work, owing to the Government freeze, which had been reflected in a cut-down in the production of internal telephones. A substitute contract, however, was being fulfilled for the Christmas trade, of assembling plastic bricks with toy shapes to be fitted into the right spaces, assembled in cardboard boxes, which had to be folded of course, as well and then parcelled up in packets. The telephone contract brought most of the workshop in operation.

Wiring circuits were put together by the women workers, who had some dexterity separating cable, cutting to length, stringing together and attaching to terminals. Other machines involved in milling, tapping and measuring to a fairly fine tolerance, were also involved.

Work was distributed between people with ability to work one-handed or two-handed; one press, for instance, was set for a simple repetitive job of puncturing the flexible rubber backs to hold brush bristles. Two larger machines for two-handed operatives, involved cutting heavy steel angled pieces to approximate lengths

which were then buffed and smoothed. A smaller but active section, supplies engraved or embossed nameplates, etc., to a fairly big firm. This involves setting the master plate in a planograph, aligning pre-shaped formica cards on the deck, and spacing and cutting the letters as required.

At about half past eleven, the workers still seem to be concentrating and quite at home with their job. To sum up this department, the object of the operation seems to be being fulfilled, of getting the trainees used to carrying out operations that involve one, two or three different skills, e.g. putting a small nut, tube or bolt, in position for drilling in two or three different directions. For the less able, it brought in the capacity to work with simple repetitive movements on an assembly line.

One of the problems here that would not apply, of course, in an ordinary training shop, is that in many cases, spastics have not been used to standing up for long periods at a time—if at all. It has been found that, to begin with, many trainees could only stand for a period of about an hour but this improves steadily to two hours, three hours and eventually all day. This, apart from making it more possible for them to find employment, has a very good psychological effect in the sense that every step towards normality is a small triumph.

No smoking is allowed in the shop and there does not seem to be much talking either. Safety regulations are rigidly enforced and overalls are worn to avoid any loose clothing catching in the machinery. It should be noted that no special precautions are taken in this respect, on the sound theory that the average business employer is not going to the trouble and expense of fitting up extra shields, etc., just to make things easier for a spastic employee.

To go to the woodwork section is to exchange the workshop's atmosphere, redolent with the smells and sounds of grease, metal and cooling fluids, for the pleasant smell of wood shavings, varnish, etc. Here, those trainees who seem to have an aptitude for working with this material, have the satisfaction of seeing a whole job through from the raw timber to the finished article; in this case, inspection boxes for time switches, etc. Here again, although all the craftsman's tools are displayed on the wall boards, ranges of chisels, etc., as are spanners and so forth in the engineering workshop, the manufacture is broken down into distinct processes which can be carried out by different machines. The timber is cut into lengths on one machine, square tenoned on another machine, glued together in a steam press (with the top and bottom already in place) and then transferred to

another machine for the sanding finish. This enclosed box is then cut in half with a rotary saw to form the lid and container, has the catches fixed and is then varnished and polished.

One of the foremen told me that it is not practical to employ epileptics in this section because of the danger of falling near a revolving saw.

Here again, production norms are observed and to keep the interest alive, they often set little tests for the trainees of increasing production, say, by 25 per cent on a particular day. Also carrying out contracts of this kind which have their definite place in the 'real' world of industry, has a good psychological effect which perhaps the old fashioned idea of making lamp standards, for instance, as a kind of woodwork therapy, did not have.

I then visited the commercial section, where Mrs. R. Dowler was busy preparing the winter issue of 'Sherrards News'—a 36-pager. In this department, she gets trainees of a higher I.Q. than the other departments but often comes up against the problem of those who desire to be trained in this sphere but lack the realistic appreciation of what it really entails. This can cause quite serious emotional problems of maladjustment, frustration and anxiety but I had a strong feeling that nobody with the basic ability would have ever wasted the opportunity of making the grade under Mrs. Dowler's sympathetic and enthusiastic encouragement.

The 'Sherrards News', which is now a valued link between past and present trainees and their families, started almost by mistake in 1963 as an exercise in using Roneo plates, etc. After one issue and popular demand, it was entitled 'Sherrards News' and became a regular quarterly production, which was given a boost from the interest shown in it by Princess Marina, when she visited Sherrards in 1965. Everyone at Sherrards is encouraged to contribute articles, and the series of covers, designed by Roger Smee, have lent it a distinctive look.

At the time of writing, Mrs. Dowler was, in fact, preparing a three-colour cover, but her artist has now gone on to work elsewhere. It was quite evident that the staff at Sherrards do not turn out their trainees like sausages from a sausage machine but are interested in them as individuals and follow their progress in their careers after leaving with interest and take a real pleasure when they hear that one of them has settled down into a decent paying job, which they would have had no hope of doing without their help.

As reported in Mrs. T. Appleby's article in SPASTICS NEWS in November, there is now an occupational therapist working

closely with the rest of the team, in the person of Miss Rosemary Pitt. This is no ordinary O.T. routine however. With the aid of various appliances, invented or perfected by members of staff and using physiotherapist techniques, the ability of various trainees to carry out various movements involved in work in the factory, has been noticeably improved.

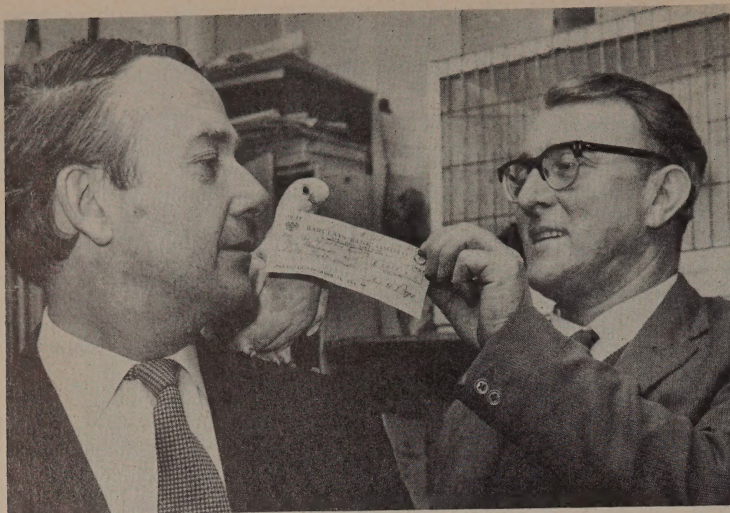
These devices have been most ingeniously contrived, not only to measure the capacity of an individual, for instance, to grasp small objects, to rotate handles at a steady rate or to appreciate the effort required in lifting or placing light or heavy objects, but also to improve their ability to do so.

Miss Pitt has devised elaborate charts of the type of movements or abilities necessary to operate different machines, e.g. one-handed or two-handed, but she also has to take into consideration that a side effect of C.P. is that many spastics have a visual field limitation for a reason not yet fully understood; something less than 180 deg. and can be as little as 130 deg. For this reason, if a spastic is seen to be squinting sideways at something, it is not because he is short-sighted but because of this curious limitation.

Without going into too much detail, Miss Pitt's devices help the handicapped to improve elbow flexion, the capacity to reach above shoulder level and to increase the sensitivity to hand movements. She is not inhibited from introducing an element of play into her work, and gadgets such as dolls and throwing discs on to a chequer board have an ascertainable value in keeping the interest alive and discouraging boredom. To begin with, she encountered some resistance among the trainees to any form of O.T.—they had had too much of it already and they did not see the point in more of it, when they were hoping to be trained in factory life. But when they see their progress charts of, say, their wrist flexion or supination, improving by 10 or 15 deg. over the weeks, thus enabling them to do things they had never done before, she has found a much more ready co-operation. Suitable trainees have a certain amount of this therapy for which they were drawn from the workshop for periods up to an hour.

There is also a domestic section, housed in a pleasant building in the grounds, and under the supervision of Miss M. Corfmat. Here, there is a model kitchen and laundry room, with washing machines, spin driers, etc., where the female of the species is taught housewifery. This was originally designed to equip the disabled to take jobs in domestic employment, but with the changing

(Continued overleaf)



Tinker, a white owl pigeon, helped Mr. Wally Pope to hand over a cheque for £3,088 to the Deputy Director, Mr. J. A. Loring, on 6th February, at Mr. Pope's pet shop, 330 Barking Road, Plaistow. It was particularly appropriate that Tinker should have a hand (or beak) in the proceedings because the money was raised at an auction of racing pigeons organised by Mr. Pope at St. Pancras Assembly Rooms. Pigeon fanciers from all over the country attended the auction and bid record prices for some of the 200 birds on offer. Mr. Pope plans to hold an even bigger sale next November to raise money for spastics

More News from Ponds

TO CELEBRATE the tenth anniversary of the formation of Ponds Music Club, a concert was organised in the village of Jordans last October. We asked groups of artists to come along and entertain, and it was a great success. Everybody enjoyed it so much that the Club could hardly believe its success.

During the last few months many of us—both walkers and chair cases—have been going up to London to the theatre. This is a good thing, for its shows what we spastics can do when we try, and it also shows that we can be a little bit independent and thoroughly enjoy such activities.

Another social took place in November, and it was very good indeed. We had some entertainment consisting of a beat group, and students from Newland Park College who gave us some folk music. Also one of the staff, called Hardy, gave us a tune on a mouth-organ which went down very well, as it was completely spontaneous. At the end of the evening hardly anybody could move, from exhaustion, as we had all been taken out of our chairs and thrust on to the dance floor with many a willing and able partner, incredible as it may seem, and danced the night away!

During the few weeks before Christmas there were quite a lot of parties and outings. Amongst them was a social evening organised by the residents of the original old building of Ponds, for they thought it would be a change to have a separate party. This went down so well that the new building folk decided to throw one of their own after Christmas.

Just before we broke up for the Christmas holidays, an amateur drama group put on a dress rehearsal of the play that they were going to perform over Christmas. It was jolly good and a rather subtle comedy-thriller called *'Lord Arthur Sackville's Crime'*, taken from one of Oscar Wilde's short stories.

As Ponds becomes more active, there come more visitors, and visitors need more people to show them round. This was the start of the 'family' showing different parties of people around Ponds. It has a twofold effect, as it relieves some of the work of the Warden and it also gives the 'family' more confidence in themselves, which I think is essential and beneficial to us.

As you know by now, Ponds had an annual Christmas dinner at the end of term. This year (or should I say last year) it was extra good, and afterwards we had a few carols and some drinks. One of the cleaners was very kind in giving us each a small present.

Cheerio for now. **Linton Edwards.**

Impressions of Sherrards (Cont'd)

social picture, it is becoming a useful training for those who may have to live in digs, in hostels or even at home. They are taught cookery and are expected to carry out the chores of bed-making, floor cleaning, etc., as well as the buying and preparing of food. Here again this has proved its usefulness because so many of the girls have had everything done for them whilst they were still at home.

Mr. V. King is the warden of the whole establishment but Mr. Sharp, as the residential warden, is responsible for the general running of the household and the social activities of the trainees. There is a ping-pong table and radiogram and Mr. Jones takes courses in music appreciation, which is his particular interest.

Under the County Council Further Education Schemes, teachers also come in from the local college to lecture on art, civics, etc. Owing to the unreliable bus service, it is difficult for the residents to get in and out of Hatfield or Welwyn to take part in outside activities, but they do go swimming and there are local residents who take an interest in the centre and the first Sunday in every month is an open day for relatives, friends and well-wishers.

The Ministry of Labour's Area Inspectors take a keen interest in the progress of the trainees and visit the centre to discuss people and problems with Mr. Jones, probably for three days every month. The foremen in the particular workshops have

to write reports on their charges at regular intervals. It is, I think, a matter for some pride that the centre has been accorded the status of an industrial training centre and not merely a training centre for sheltered employment and I had the impression that the Sherrards' staff thought that, although Meadow Works at Birmingham were such a 'grand affair', anything they could do, Sherrards could do as well, if not better, with their much more limited scope.

It was certainly a far-sighted move for the Society to set up this centre in this area, where there is so much light industry in the vicinity, and in fact, the broad base of the scheme served in some sense as a pilot for the ventures in Birmingham and Lancaster.

By way of a footnote, as a personal impression, it did not seem to me that the trainees looked very fit. It is perhaps, difficult to realise that people who are severely handicapped have questions of health, quite apart from their handicap and the inability to take normal exercise is obviously a limiting factor but where complexions are not good, either male or female, one would think that there may be some dietary supplement needed.

On such a short visit, it is obviously impossible to assess morale, but the trainees I talked to seemed, on the whole, to be in good spirits and to share in the pleasure felt by the staff at the success of the ex-pupils.

SOMETHING NEW in Society affairs occurred on February 3rd, when Mr. James Loring, the newly-appointed Deputy Director, called the Regional Officers and senior staff together to discuss the position of headquarters *vis-a-vis* the groups.

Seminar, 'teach-in', open confessional, it was something of all three: beatings of the breast, and cries of 'mea culpa' alternated with complaints that group members did not understand the Society's problems—and did not try to.

Obviously, with the late Director, Dr. Stevens, having died so recently, a certain amount of heart-searching about the Society's role, its image, its functions and its faults, is inevitable: his hand is missing from the helm, that had held it steady for ten years.

But despite this uncertainty, I see no need for a loss of faith in our vital work or in our ability to cope with it.

True, as Mr. Burn said in his New Year message, finances are difficult in a period of squeeze, but that is a challenge we all have to face.

As Mr. Noel Lyster-Binns remarked, 'It is never easy to raise money from the public', what it entails now is a greater effort and a more imaginative approach to fund-raising.

This involves greater efficiency from the Staff and more co-operation from the Groups.

ILLIBERAL? STUFFY? AUTOCRATIC?

Staff Conference Discussion

Mr. Loring's Initiative

The effectiveness of our Appeal is also bound up with the Society's 'image'. As far as this vogue word means anything, it is a combination of reputation and achievement. And here it is worth stressing once again the phenomenal growth of the Society and its progress throughout the country, and to repeat that in five short years, no less than 23 work centres, employing 675 men and women have been brought into being, and the number of Groups has risen to 163—quite near the ceiling mentioned by Mr. A. M. Frank, of 200.

This should surely be a matter of pride.

It could never have been achieved without the funds that came to us under the arrangement with R.P.P., but nevertheless the strict accounting and economic probity of Mr. John Price and his in-

vestment and financial advisers have done everything possible to make the most of what has come our way.

If forward planning has erred on the side of optimism—it is the right side: we can never forget the distress of parents whose children are on the waiting list for places in a school or a home.

As Mr. Derek Lancaster-Gaye pointed out, for every project, careful assessment is made of the need and close consultation takes place with the local or Regional bodies concerned. Here Mr. Stopford said that if more groups had been encouraged to develop centres supported by professional guidance from the central organisation, the Society's services would have expanded more quickly.

A great many other problems were discussed in detail that we have no room to report but one that seems to come up far too often is that the Groups think that the Society is 'wealthy' and remote from their local difficulties in its 'de luxe' offices in London.

This could not be further from the truth. The Society does dispose of large sums of money every year, including considerable amounts to the Groups themselves, but in relation to the things that need to be done, the Society is always working on a budget animated by hope and organised on a shoe-string.

It would, of course, be possible to move head office out of London—but is it desirable? That surely is a purely practical question that should be considered with cool judgment and not hastily improvised in order to overcome irrational prejudice.

Mr. Loring made an announcement at the close of the meeting which he thought would constitute a firm step in the right direction. A standing Staff Conference on 'Relations with Groups' was to be set up so that Groups would know that the Society's administrators were doing their utmost to hammer out a common policy and move forward together.

With this, the Staff are in full agreement, and, although it is clearly an untenable proposition to claim that we are 'employed' by the Groups, group members may rest assured that there is no fissiparous tendency within the organisation.

O.R.B.

Staff Equipment Group at Meldreth

MELDRETH TRAINING SCHOOL is a pioneer project and, as such, proved an ideal venue for the start of a new year's activity for the Society's Staff Equipment Group which met there on 6th February. Members were welcomed at Royston Station by the Warden (Mr. G. H. Crabb) and, appropriately, began the day by inspecting a new ambulance complete with telescopic ramp, among a number of novel features, featured in the February issue of SPASTICS NEWS.

At Meldreth the Assembly Hall was admired and interest was expressed in a triangle of rubber pathway (a product of 'Runnymede' Rubber Co. Ltd.), an idea of Mr. Crabb's designed to protect the very fine floor surface.

Typical classroom furniture had been grouped for a business session where, among other matters, a prototype adapted chair was shown and discussed. Here the physiotherapist's problem was of providing mobility between classroom and dining room, on which members were able to advise.

Hexagonal dining tables for children, and circular tables for staff, were seen at lunchtime and a peep into the kitchens proved of interest. In the staff quarters a wall-hanging bookcase (Finmar Ltd.) with adjustable shelves, provoked discussion

and a commendation was made of a combined dressing table and writing desk (Meredrew Ltd.).

In the dormitories discussion centred on beds and a Meldreth adaptation of the side rails, designed to give greater strength and rigidity. These beds (perhaps best described as the bottom half of a two-tier bunk) have been used in many of the Society's projects and, in general, have given satisfaction. Unfortunately the beds cannot easily be made to undertake special procedures—postural drainage was mentioned—but possibly bed blocks might suffice.

The grand tour, as it were, ended in the laundry, where the equipment appeared to be most efficient. One problem, however, is of drying capacity in the vagaries of the English climate—drying cabinets, even at full blast, are not as good as sunshine!

Those present at the meeting were:—

Mrs. Clifton (Schools and Centres Sec.); Mrs. Kearslake (Headmistress, Craig-y-Parc School); Miss Varty (Headmistress, Inghild Manor School); Mrs. Brown (Ponds Home); Miss Dawson-Shepherd; Miss Keene, Miss de Chaineux; Miss Lopofski (Asst. Architect); and Mrs. Summers (Matron of Meldreth Training School); also Mr. Summers (Dep. Sec. Centres); Mr. Elwes (Appliance Officer); Mr. Thorp (Asst. Architect); Mr. Roake (Asst. Supplies Officer); Mr. Crabb; and Mr. Mitchell (Supplies Officer); in the Chair.

M.A.M.



Three prize-winners at the Wolverhampton Smiling Faces Fancy Dress first birthday party, Jean Stubbs, Felicity Baldock and Elizabeth Broom. Dr. Margaret Griffiths, Chairman, presented the prizes

(Courtesy: Express and Star)

Cross-Section of the Press

Mr. Hogg Talks Sense

MR. HOGG said in a debate in the House recently, 'We have to build a society in which no group or class feel unwanted, undervalued or superfluous, and that applies no less to our gifted children than to our abnormal or handicapped children. . . .'

(Daily Telegraph)

Companions—for Life

THE WEDDING recently took place at Scunthorpe of Mr. Gerald Carton and Miss Priscilla Jacques who are both working as House Companions at Ponds. After their honeymoon in Jersey, the couple are now living at Beaconsfield, in a flat provided by The Spastics Society.

(Scunthorpe and Frodingham Star)

New Typewriter for Elaine

ELAINE DUCKETT, a 19-year-old Oakwood students is learning to use a special typewriter adapted for the Initial Teaching Alphabet. It is hoped that Elaine might eventually be able to work transcribing books for the publishers of the alphabet if and when the demand for this new form

ews . . . news and views .

of teaching children to read increases. Elaine gained O-levels at Thomas Delarue School before going to Oakwood where she has already passed one A-level and is studying for another. Although confined to a wheelchair and unable to speak, Elaine travels around on her own and communicates with other people by means of a letter board.

(Faversham News—
Therese Appleby)

port came from young carol singers, Infants' School pupils and a lady artist who donated two paintings for sale on behalf of Group funds.

(Worthing Herald and The Citizen)

Tees-Side Work Centre

£30,000 HAS been collected locally towards a new work centre in Middlesbrough, expected to be open in July. It will provide work for about 40 spastics unable to find employment in open industry.

(Evening Gazette)

Centre for Tunbridge Wells

TUNBRIDGE WELLS and Tonbridge Group will shortly be looking round for a piece of ground on which to build, or a house suitable for conversion into a centre for spastic children or one where older spastics can meet. A major part of the money for this project was collected last year at a Midnight Film Matinee organised by the Tonbridge Rotary Club.

(Kent and Sussex Courier)

Champion Plays for Spastics

MIDLANDS AREA billiards and snooker champion, Kingsley Kennerley, played several matches at York recently and was beaten once by a local player, Wally Bardy. Kennerley ended the evening, organised on behalf of The Spastics Society, with a display of trick snooker and billiards shots.

(Yorkshire Gazette and Herald)

Tribute to the Young

IN A LETTER to his local paper, Mr. L. R. Needham, Hon. Treasurer, Wolverhampton and District Spastics Society, praises the young people who have collected money for the group. Pupils of Highfields School raised nearly £150 by singing carols and Wednesbury College of Commerce students gave £85 from their Rag Day proceeds. Mr. Needham says it is good to know that, despite the pressures of a materialistic age, these young people do not lack humanity.

(Wolverhampton Express and Star)

Shropshire Fund-Raisers

£610 WAS COLLECTED last year for Shropshire Spastics Society by the combined efforts of Mr. George Evans, a retired railwayman, and 24-year-old Secretary, Miss Brenda Cordukes.

Mr. Evans, whose interest in charities dates back to the First World War, has been collecting for spastics since 1956. He estimates that during this time he has raised over £4,000, about a third of it in the last two years with Miss Cordukes' help.

(Shropshire Star)

New Appointments

MISS MARJORIE BERRISFORD has recently been made housemistress at Meldreth Training Centre, where she will be responsible for a house of 30 young spastics.

Mr. and Mrs. R. Bruton have taken over supervision of Penderels Spastics Home in Coventry. Although Mrs. Bruton is a State Registered Nurse, her husband has not had previous experience of this kind of work. However, his 30 years in industry should prove valuable in the administration of the centre.

(Cambridge Independent Press and
Coventry Evening Telegraph)

Christmas Generosity

WORTHING AND GLOUCESTER are only two of the Groups which benefited from public generosity at Christmas time. Monetary gifts amounting to about £15 were put through the letter box of Worthing Training Centre, while in Gloucester sup-

ews and views . . . news and

Coins from the Fountain

FOR SOME TIME, workers at Spastics Society Headquarters have had a good view of London's newest landmark—the Post Office Tower. Now the Society has received a donation of £15 from the G.P.O. This is part of the sum retrieved from the ornamental pool at the foot of the Tower, whose visitors had been following the Roman custom of dropping coins in a fountain.

(Brentford and Chiswick Times)

New Swimming Pools

THE THERAPEUTIC value of swimming for the disabled is now being recognised by Local Authorities, and Bexley have just opened a new Municipal baths which include a teaching pool with a special sunken area of 3ft deep for the instruction of small children and incapacitated people such as spastics.

(Municipal Engineering)

Mrs. Wheeldon Resigns

MRS. W. WHEELDON has decided to resign from the chairmanship of Castleford and District Spastics Committee, owing to pressure of her other commitments as a magistrate and social worker. Mrs. Wheel- don, who has been closely connected with the group since it was founded eleven years ago, regrets having to take this step, but hopes to retain a link with the Spastics' cause.

(Pontefract Express)

Beware the Black Sheep

THERE ARE SOME BOGUS door-to-door collectors at large. They pose as collectors of rags, etc., for spastics and other charities too. They also offer combs and ball point pens 'prepared by spastics'. The Press has uncovered this racket and the racketeers have had some bad publicity, and in one case, been successfully prosecuted. But the danger is that if anyone is taken in by a collector without proper credentials, they only have to have one receipt—for however small a sum—from the Charity concerned to escape the law.

The Society wishes it to be known that they have nothing whatever to do with this type of collection. But if a local group should organise such a thing it will be properly organised and officially recognised. So, if you hear of any such unauthorised collections going on, please notify the police, the press and the Society.

Another swindle being perpetrated in the name of spastics is the chain letter or chain postcard which occurs from time to time.

The suggestion is made that unless money is sent to a certain address and the letter forwarded on, spastics will lose the benefit if 'the chain is broken'.

The Society, of course, has



Photograph taken by B. Gedin, a house laid at the Centre

It was a sad day for staff and residents alike when this Majestic old chestnut tree was felled in the grounds of Coombe Farm recently

nothing whatever to do with such dubious transactions and Groups should be on the alert to put a stop to them if they occur in their district.

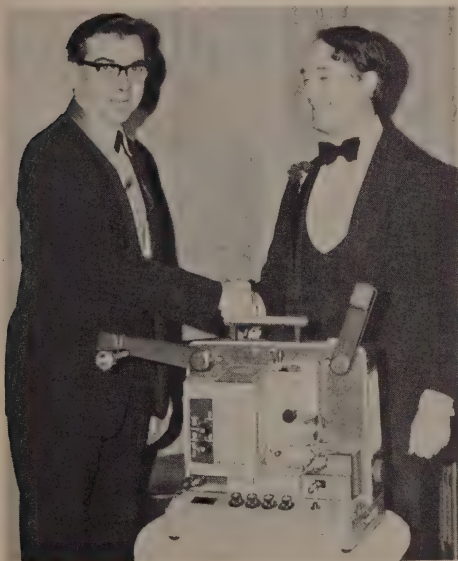
A Gift for a Bride

KATHY BUNDOCK would like to give her pearl coronet and layered nylon bridal veil to a fellow spastic bride. Photographs and a fuller description will be sent to anyone who is interested. Please write to her at 21 Carnalt Gardens, Putney, London, S.W.15.

Kathy Bundock (née Brittin) left her job at University College Hospital and now works as a receptionist at Queen Mary's Hospital, Roehampton, near her new home.

Editor's Note

WE WOULD BE GRATEFUL if the anonymous correspondent who wrote an extremely critical letter to the Editor, about the care—or rather lack of care—for older spastics, would be kind enough to inform us of their name and address so that the matter can be looked into.



Mr. James Loring, Deputy Director, receiving on behalf of Coombe Farm, a Filmosound Projector, presented by Mr. Robert Leaman, Chief Ranger of the Independent Order of Foresters' Court Surrey Pine, at the Branch's ball in Wandsworth, London

Any Answers? — Current Affairs Quiz

AN INTERESTING PANEL of speakers gathered at Park Crescent recently to take part in a session of 'Any Questions' arranged by the Staff Social Club. Miss Dee Wells (Mrs. Freddy Ayer), Mrs. Joyce Butler, M.P. (Labour), Col. Sir M. Stoddart-Scott, M.P. (Conservative), and Mr. A. R. Capel (Liberal), were the panelists, and the Society's Chairman, Mr. W. A. Burn, was a tactful question master.

Refreshments in the shape of wine and cheese were taken first, and a gay company that included Mrs. Burn, Mr. James Loring, and nearly 100 members of the staff and their friends, assembled in the mail-room, converted for the occasion by Mrs. Howell and her helpers, into a buffet and bar, and then adjourned to the Committee Room.

Questions ranged from the mini-skirt—reference the hair-raising possibility of mini-kilts, to drugs and the young, and the apparent lack in the present day of great masters of the arts to compare with Shakespeare, Beethoven and Rembrandt.

Questions were very fully and, on the whole, fairly answered but on two subjects, namely the Common Market and the Monarchy, the experts reflected the woolly-thinking of the general public rather than clarifying the issues involved.

The panel seemed to agree with Mr. Wilson's new-found desire to enter the Common Market although he campaigned against it whilst out of office and at the last election. This, surely, is more than just 'flexibility'. It is nearer to 'deviousness'; it will be a scandal if Great Britain

is taken into the Common Market without reference to the electorate. There should obviously be a national referendum on the subject, not a 'gag' on dissident views—like Mrs. Butler's.

People seem to overlook (a) the fact that we are already in Europe in the sense that the U.K. belongs to E.F.T.A., which includes the prosperous Scandinavian countries and (b) the food and wool imports from Australia and New Zealand are a major factor in keeping down the cost of living, and (c) that the whole structure of social security will be jeopardised—apart from the somewhat sinister political implications.

As regards the Monarchy, why do people have this obsession that it is 'democratic' for the Royal Family to ride around on bicycles? (Mr. Marples and Mr. Hogg are the only Ministers to do so.) The Monarchy represents a regal tradition going back to Edward the Confessor and beyond. Parliament represents the will of the power groups in the country, going back to the Commonwealth and Simon de Montfort and beyond. Both these sources of authority in the country are united in the person of the Sovereign.

The last occasion on which there was a clash between King and Parliament, Democracy, in the dubious shape of Mr. Baldwin, won hands down when Edward VIII was forced to abdicate. It will be a sad day for the liberty of the subject when the ultimate court of appeal is a party political leader.

O.R.B.

Co-ordination Conference in Manchester

MOST PEOPLE CONCERNED with helping Spastics would probably agree that regional co-operation amongst those most involved—Care Staff, Consultants, Group Members, Local Authority Officials, Regional Organisers and Administrators—would be a first step towards the setting up of a comprehensive service to deal with the many problems involved.

The first Study Group to be organised along these lines is to be held in Manchester from 24th to 26th February, 1967, when representatives of all the Spastics Groups in the Manchester area will be pooling their knowledge and ideas in discussing: 'The Co-ordination of Services to Spastics on a Regional Basis'.

It is hoped that this Study Group will be the first of many and a full report of its proceedings will appear in the April edition of SPASTICS NEWS.

F.G.M.

ADVERTISEMENT

'Make Your Own Rug. Complete Kit for 27in. by 54in., 25s.; 36in. by 72in., 37s. 6d. S.a.e., Samples Winwood Textiles, Kidderminster.'

Members of the 56th Assessment Course at Colwall Court





Mr. R. D. Smith, Warden of Prested Hall, Mr. Robert Bland and Mr. James Loring, Deputy Director

Robert Bland: THE FULL STORY

DURING THE PAST MONTH Robert Bland has been a headline name in newspapers all over the world. The story they told about the 20-year-old Australian spastic who travelled half-way around the world to find work in Britain, only to be refused permission to land at Tilbury aroused the sympathy of thousands of well-wishers.

It ended happily. But for Robert Bland and The Spastics Society it was a long and complex story which began more than a year ago and continued in a sequence of letters, inquiries and exchanges about immigration regulations as the months went by.

This is the chronicle of Robert Bland's persistent efforts to reach Britain and the way he was helped by The Spastics Society:

FEBRUARY, 1966: Robert at home in Sydney writes to the Society asking for assistance in finding accommodation and work in Britain.

MARCH: The Society sends details of employment grades and financial implications.

APRIL/MAY: General information is exchanged.

JUNE: The Society learns that the Australian Department of Social Service has confirmed Robert's pension will be valid in Britain for twelve months.

JULY: Robert raises the question of a work permit.

AUGUST: The Society is told that no permit is needed because Robert is not seeking permanent work in Britain. But he will have to apply to the British High Commissioner in Australia for a Working Holiday Permit. Senior staff from Australia's Centre Industries visit the Birmingham Sheltered Workshops and it is suggested that Robert should be employed there. Robert is informed and is asked by the Society to make further checks on his pension rights in Britain. Then the Society

is told that he will need a work permit after all, and should apply for it before sailing.

SEPTEMBER: Robert is told that the British Consular Office has advised him that the Society should apply for the permit.

NOVEMBER: The Society obtains the necessary details and explains to Robert that normally a work permit is handed to

advised them that a visitor's visa will enable Robert to stay in Britain for six months. By the end of that period a Commonwealth immigrant's voucher should be available.

It may not seem a very dramatic diary of events. But it culminated in Robert waiting heart-broken in his cabin aboard the S.S. *Orsova* on February 5, while Mr. James Loring, Deputy Director of the Society, negotiated with the Home Office for permission for Robert to disembark.

The story's ending was a happy one. Robert has now been granted a working holidaymaker's permit which entitles him to spend a year in Britain and the right to apply for an extension at the end of it. He has been on an assessment course at Bexhill and is now making new friends in Birmingham.

The confusion was not the fault of the Home Office. Robert *SHOULD* have had a Commonwealth immigrant's voucher. Nor was it his fault. The authorities failed to tell him he needed the voucher.

It was not the fault of The Spastics Society. They could not have foreseen that their cable would not reach Robert in time.

'But at least' said Robert, 'It has given me something out of the ordinary to write home about'.

MAISON DES LANDES

We have been asked to point out that Mrs. Edwards' Hotel in Jersey is open for people with handicaps of **ALL** types, not only spastics.

REGIONAL OFFICE, SOUTH WALES

The only telephone number of Mr. B. Kingsley-Davies' office in Cardiff, is **CARDIFF 29289**. Please note.

by

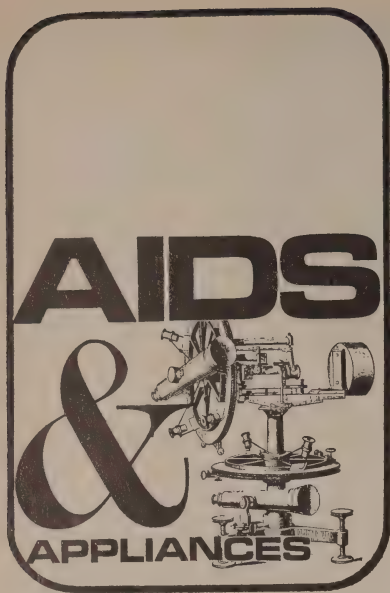
JUNE SAMPSON

the would-be visitor by the British High Commission in Australia before he leaves, but when time is short it can be sent to the port of entry in Britain to await his arrival.

DECEMBER 13: The Birmingham workshop asks the Ministry of Labour how far the application has gone.

DECEMBER 22: The Society is advised that there is a 14-month waiting list for Commonwealth immigrants' vouchers and without one a visitor may be allowed only a short stay in Britain irrespective of whether or not he intends working. The Society cables Robert immediately pointing out that he should have been told of the need for an immigrant voucher by the Australian authorities months previously and suggesting he should clarify the position.

JANUARY 9, 1967: A letter confirming the cable reaches Robert's home. But he has already sailed for Britain. The cable had not reached him in time. The same day his mother writes to the Society to say that their travel agent in Australia has



*Compiled
by*

N. D. B. Elwes

A Few more Cars for the Disabled

ON FEBRUARY 15TH, the Minister of Health Mr. Kenneth Robinson, M.P., announced to the House of Commons that the following groups of people, if they were already eligible for motorised tricycles, could be issued with a car as an alternative.

A member of the first group would be a disabled parent who had lost his or her spouse and had been left alone to care for the child or children of the marriage. If such a parent is entitled to a tricycle, he or she will be offered the alternative of a car for as long as he or she is responsible for a child. Members of the second group would be two relatives in the same household not necessarily man and wife, of whom one is eligible for a vehicle and the other blind. Members of the third group would be two relatives in the same household both eligible for an invalid vehicle, one of whom is under sixteen years of age and therefore unable to hold a driving licence.

The Minister also said that in 'exceptional circumstances where a real medical need exists' the Ministry will supply an estate car model instead of a small saloon car.

The Ministry also recognise the need for driving instruction for the disabled who are entitled to these cars and an instruction scheme is being organised.

Garages are still necessary but the Minister realising the difficulty some handicapped people have to get the necessary money together to hire or build a garage will give a prepayment of up to half the first year's maintenance allowance—approximately £30.

The Minister and the Secretary of State for Scotland have decided that although they have gone as far as they can on present statutory authority, they will be asking Parliament before long to legislate to enable further advances to be made. It was, however, stressed that the cost of future improvements must, clearly be reconciled with the demands on other sectors of the National Health Service.



**Wingfield Junior Bed Frame and Desk,
10in. by 17in.**

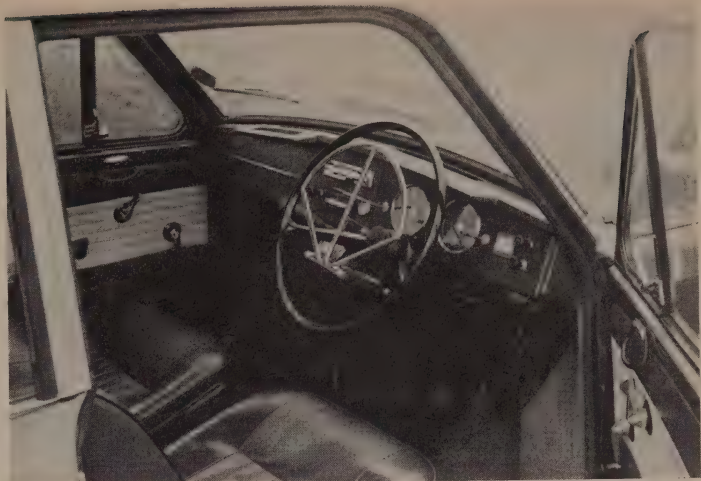
We apologise for a misprint in the January issue when the photograph of the adjustable bed table made by Woodberry Brothers and Haines Ltd., Highbridge, Somerset, at £5 9s. 9d. was shown as the Wingfield Bed Frame. The above photograph is of the Wingfield made by The Hand Loom Centre, 59 Crest View Drive, Petts Wood, Kent, at a basic cost of £6 12s. 0d.

Adapted Car Control

Handicapped people who drive a car which has hand controls fitted to suit them, can claim road tax exemption. In order to get this however, they must be eligible under one of the three following categories for the supply of power propelled tricycle:

- (1) Patients who have one leg amputated above the knee and the other amputated either above or below the knee.
- (2) Patients suffering from paraplegia or other defects of the locomotive system, equivalent to the total or almost total loss of both legs so that the patient is to all intents and purposes unable to walk.
- (3) Patients slightly less severely disabled with very limited walking ability, who, because of their disability, need to have a machine to get to and from work.

This means that you are only eligible for hand control conversions to your car if you are eligible for a tricycle and the same qualification applies to road tax exemption so long as your car is fitted with hand controls.



If you qualify for a power propelled tricycle but own your own car, then your Ministry of Health Appliance Centre will give details of a grant of up to £80 for the installation of suitable hand controls to your car

From chair to car using a bridgeboard, chair with swinging detachable footrests



a. Attendant positions chair facing the car, removes foot-rests, applies brakes, and then removes armrests.

b. Legs are moved to the left side of chair, weight is then diagonally on the chair. The bridgeboard is placed securely on both chair and car seats.

c. Slide along the bridgeboard onto the car seat.

DATA:

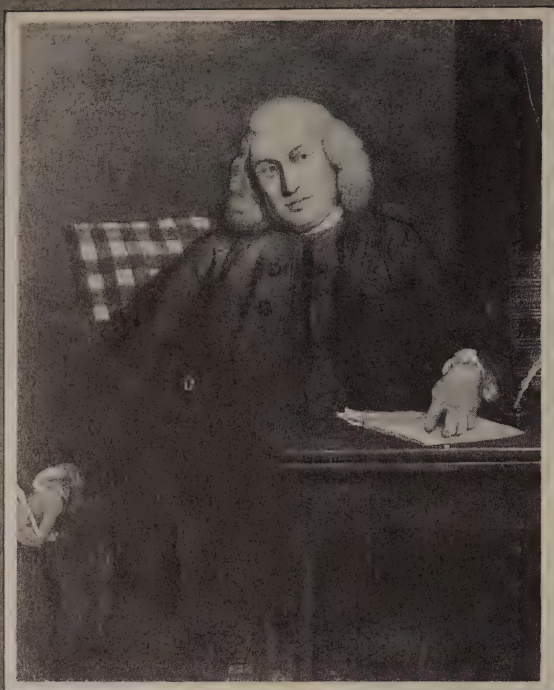
Height of car-seat to ground—15in.



d. Lift both legs into car.

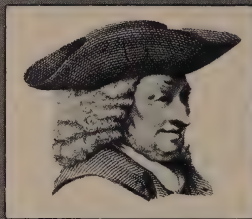
e. Remove bridgeboard. The attendant can then stow the chair into the car.

(Reproduced by kind permission of Everest and Jennings Co. Ltd.).



Dr. Samuel Johnson by Sir Joshua Reynolds

Was Dr. Johnson a Spastic?



ANNE PLUMMER examines
the evidence for and against

ALTHOUGH only recently defined as such, the condition of Cerebral Palsy has doubtless existed throughout history. It is thought that Dr. Samuel Johnson, the great 18th-Century literary figure might have been a spastic.

He was born in 1709, the son of a bookseller, at Lichfield in Staffordshire. At two-and-a-half he became ill with scrofula, or the 'King's Evil', a common disease at this time. The superstitious believed that it could be cured by contact with the Monarch. Little Samuel was accordingly taken to London to be 'touched' by Queen Anne. Despite this precaution, the illness left him with a badly scarred face and impaired vision in one eye. I feel that if the disease were severe enough to affect the optic nerves in this way, slight brain damage may also have occurred, especially in so young a child. However, there is no medical evidence for this.

Johnson showed early promise of a brilliant mind and made rapid progress at Lichfield Grammar School. In his biography, Boswell tells how three classmates would call for him each morning and carry him bodily to school. The adulatory Boswell sees this as a mark of deference to a superior mind, but small boys do not usually admire mental ability to this extent. One feels that Johnson may have been carried merely because he could not walk so fast as the others. He did not join in sports and said later in life '... How wonderfully he had contrived to be idle without them...' However, on one occasion, he walked sixteen miles from Lichfield to Birmingham and back again.

After leaving school at sixteen he was idle at home for two years, reading widely, before going to Pembroke College, Oxford. However, he had to leave without taking a degree

because his father could not afford to keep him there. Soon afterwards the father died, leaving Samuel only twenty pounds.

He taught at a school in Leicestershire for a few months, but hated the work and soon moved to Birmingham. Here, at twenty-five, he married Elizabeth Porter, a widow nearly twice his age. It seems to have been a love-match, despite the age difference and Johnson's unprepossessing appearance, described by his step-daughter as tall and lanky, with scarred face and subject to 'Convulsive starts and odd gestures which tended to excite at once surprise and ridicule'.

Certainly he had no financial motives for the marriage as his bride was almost as poor as he. With the little money they could raise between them, he started a school of his own. One of the pupils was David Garrick, later to become a famous actor, who delighted in mimicking his master's 'oddities of manner, and uncouth gesticulations'.

The school did not prosper and in 1737 the Johnsons moved to London. The capital at this time was a fascinating mixture of aristocratic elegance and Newgate squalor. It was a Mecca for the artistic and literary talent of the time and before long Johnson had met many leading figures of the day, some of whom were to remain his life-long friends. It is interesting to note how several of these people reacted to his physical appearance.

The painter, Hogarth, speaks of him, '... Shaking his head and rolling himself about in a strange, ridiculous manner...' and was surprised when he joined intelligently in the conversation.

Another eye-witness reports, '... When he walked the

streets, what with the constant roll of his head and the concomitant motion of his body, he appeared to make his way by that motion, independent of his feet . . .

An Irish visitor mentions his awkwardness at table and adds, unflatteringly, ' . . . He is forever dancing the devil's jig and sometimes makes drivelling efforts to whistle some thought in his absent paroxysms . . . ' The last two words suggest epilepsy, but there is no indication that Johnson ever lost consciousness and the convulsive movements seemed to continue most of the time.

Sir Joshua Reynolds, the portrait painter, a close friend of Johnson noticed, however, that he could control his movements on occasions, if reminded, or when he became absorbed in conversation. It has been suggested that this indicates a compulsive neurosis rather than Cerebral Palsy, but athetoids frequently have this ability to keep still temporarily, by an effort of concentration or when their attention is held.

Boswell thought the condition was St. Vitus' Dance. His own description of Johnson's symptoms is as follows:—

' . . . He commonly held his head on one side and shook it in a tremulous manner, moving his body backwards and forwards and rubbing his knee in the same direction with the palm of his left hand . . . In the intervals of articulating he made various sounds as if . . . chewing the cud, . . . giving half a whistle . . . or clucking like a hen . . . '

Commenting on Johnson's fondness for tea, then just becoming fashionable and thought to be dangerously over-relaxing if taken in large quantities, Boswell says, ' . . . He never felt the least inconvenience, which is proof that the fault of his constitution was rather a too great tension of fibres than the contrary . . . '

Fifteen years after their arrival in London, Johnson's wife died. He mourned her deeply and was to remember her with great tenderness for the rest of his life. He had managed to earn a meagre living for them both in the capital by contributing to various periodicals, but the shadow of poverty was never very far away.

Johnson's reading had given him a wide vocabulary which he always used with the utmost precision and in 1755 he published his 'Dictionary of the English Language', a remarkable single-handed achievement. The same year he was awarded an honorary M.A. by Oxford University and later in life he was to receive doctor's degrees from both Dublin and Oxford.

Despite the nationwide renown of the dictionary he continued to suffer financial hardship. When his mother died, he wrote 'Rasselas', a short philosophical novel, in seven evenings in order to pay for her funeral. He was over fifty before George III was persuaded to grant him an allowance of £300 a year, in recognition of his services to Literature.

It was in his early fifties also that he became friendly with James Boswell the young Scotsman who was later to publish the famous 'Life of Johnson', which has given succeeding generations such a vivid picture of the great lexicographer. Allowing for Boswell's tendency to hero-worship, Johnson emerges as a man of high religious principles who, under a rough exterior, was capable of great tenderness. He loved

children, in an age when this was unusual and gave generously to the poor when he had any money. He was also extremely kind to Frank Barber, his coloured servant, and to various unfortunates whom he had taken into his home.

However, he was distinctly eccentric in his dress and manner. At times he could be impatient and irascible to the point of rudeness. Few people escaped the withering lash of his tongue. When a certain lady of Republican sympathies said that she would like to do away with the Aristocracy and see all men equal, he suggested that she invited her footman to sit down to dinner with them—something unheard of in those days.

'She has never liked me since!' he said gleefully, when recounting the story afterwards.

About a Methodist preacher he remarked:—

' . . . His popularity, sir, is chiefly owing to the peculiarity of his manner. He would be followed by crowds were he to wear a night-cap in the pulpit or were he to preach from a tree . . . '

The watermen who plied for hire on the Thames were notorious for the colourful inventiveness of their language. Johnson, taking a trip down the river one day, showed that he could outdo them by calling out: ' . . . Sir, your wife, under pretence of keeping a bawdy-house, is a receiver of stolen goods . . . '!

When somebody praised the 'wild and noble' beauty of Scotland, he retorted, 'Sir, the noblest prospect that a Scotchman ever sees is the high road that takes him to England'!

However, ten years after the first meeting with Boswell he was persuaded to leave his beloved London on a visit to his young friend's home in Ayrshire, and to accompany him on a tour of the Hebrides. This was the first of several long journeys which Johnson made in his mid-sixties. In succeeding years he visited Wales and France with some other close friends, Mr. and Mrs. Thrale. Whatever his disability, he must have had a strong constitution to stand up to the rigours of travel by small boat and by horse-drawn carriage over the poor roads of the time.

In 1781 Johnson published 'Lives of the Poets', his last major literary achievement, and from that time onwards his health began to decline. Suffering recurrent attacks of dropsy and respiratory troubles, he became gradually weaker and finally died at the age of seventy-five.

The severity of his affliction seemed neither to increase nor diminish in any way during later life. In the summing-up portion of his biography, Boswell writes, ' . . . He never knew the natural joy of a free and vigorous use of his limbs. When he walked it was like the struggling gait of one in fetters . . . ' This seems to round off the picture formed by other descriptions, and in the light of modern knowledge, one gains a very vivid impression of Johnson as a spastic.

We shall probably never know whether he really suffered from Cerebral Palsy but, for my part, I should like to think that he did. He could be an inspiration to us all, a man who struggled against financial and physical difficulties to become a legend in his own lifetime and, thanks to Boswell, an important figure in the history of English Literature.



Dr. Johnson and his friend, James Boswell, in Fleet Street

Practical Training for the Severely Handicapped Child

by Milan Morgenstern, Helen Low-Beer and Franz Morgenstern.
Published by the Spastics Society and William Heinemann Medical Books at 21s. 0d. illustrated, 134 pages

THE SPASTICS SOCIETY deserves to be congratulated for publishing this very attractive book at such a reasonable price, which is a valuable source, offering systematic advice to teachers, parents and therapists.

Much indeed has been done in Britain to provide specialist centres for children suffering from different handicaps, e.g. by way of special schools and nurseries, child guidance centres and home teachers, to help cope with the problems encountered in their education, but this still leaves a great part of their time spent at home. It is here that any advice to parents in organising their efforts to help their child in a systematic manner is urgently called for.

The authors describe the practical problems arising in the daily life of handicapped children, and use their case reports to describe just how these were handled in practice. The book deals with the training of skills, using and co-ordinating the hands, dressing, cutting, sewing, etc., as well as giving detailed illustrations of the early approach to teaching of language communication and the three R's. All the examples chosen, come from practical work with handicapped children, and together they guide the parent or teacher who will use the book through the maze of difficulties he will encounter.

The importance of early treatment is recognised in any form of handicap,

whether this is physical or mental. Not only does early treatment provide the longest period of training during the formative years of childhood: its effects go far beyond, into the attitudes to learning, and experiences of success and failure which provide the incentives for a child in teaching. A child who has been taught to look forward to successful progress during training sessions, has learned a social skill in the positive attitude he develops, which will go a long way to counter the numerous occasions when his handicap forces him into isolation or failure.

Useful Illustrations

There is a special appendix of 49 drawings, illustrating further material readily developed in the course of work. These were the items most commonly used during thirty years of special teaching, and are invaluable as a basis of further improvisations.

Here, then is no armchair, sentimental approach to the training of handicapped children. Instead the authors bring compassion and skill, based on sound psychological principles, to the teaching of such children. The basic elements of the method in this book, are to work through success, that each teaching session must end in success, and that where there is failure on the part of the child to follow the plans of his teacher, a detailed analysis of the separate skills demanded, say

in cutting or in drawing, will show just what it is that the child cannot follow. The point at which the child fails, through lack of skill, or through boredom, shows what line the teacher should next follow if he is to guide the child successfully to acquire a new skill. How this is done is best left to those immediately concerned, and the experience which use of this guide will provide within the home.

Great books in the field of special education are rare, and this book is a landmark in the art of teaching handicapped children.

Professor Tizard's elegant tribute in the preface to the book, deserves mentioning—'This book is so rich in psychological insights, and the authors are so inventive in their techniques, that I believe it will prove an enduring contribution to the literature, worthy to take its place beside the classical studies of Itard, Seguin, Montessori and Decroly'.

Special material (derived from this method), which allows large and stable brick constructions to be built—houses, streets, etc., as well as serving much more specific teaching aims, has been manufactured by Paul and Marjorie Abbott Ltd., 94 Wimpole Street, London, W.1. These so-called 'ready-made' toys, are properly called Developmental Toys, which, because of their size and shape, allow much free improvisation with certain basic forms in a variety of settings.

SPECIAL TOYS FOR SPECIAL SEPARATE SKILLS



(Left): It can be frustrating when a nearly completed building is destroyed by an involuntary hand movement. These children are using 'brick-complexes', specially designed to fit into each other so their houses can't be knocked over so easily

(Right): Children enjoy learning to dress themselves with simplified 'clothes' made of stiff cardboard, easier to manipulate at this stage than normal cloth garments





A GUINEA for Mr. Charles Greenhill!

We print here the
winning letter in our
monthly competition
—and it is still on . . .

CONSTRUCTIVE HELP

Dear Editor,

Having read the article 'When School has Finished', in the February issue, I felt that at last someone was writing a whole lot of commonsense about dealing with handicapped persons after leaving school. I fully endorse everything the writer said regarding this serious problem.

I should like to see much more thought being given to catering for the handicapped person who is of fairly low intelligence but is quite independent physically. Usually such young people can talk well and give the appearance of having much higher intellect than is actually the case, and I have found that they have ideas and aspirations far in advance of their capabilities.

One example of this was a young fellow who desperately wanted to get a motorised invalid car when he became 16 years of age. Instead of telling him he

would never be able to control it successfully, he was given a Highway Code and we read over some of the items he would have to memorise. After several attempts at deciphering the relevant information he decided it was too difficult and that a car was not all that important anyway. A situation that could have been frustrating to the boy was thus avoided and the decision not to pursue the issue any further came voluntarily from himself.

On another occasion a boy was taken for admission to a residential home with a sheltered workshop. His first comment was that he did not fancy living with all those men. He had been living in a residential special school for the previous 10 years, it being the only home he had really known and the shock of finding himself now expected to live and work with adolescents and adults was a bit overwhelming at first, but by careful handling he soon settled in.

Genuine understanding of handicapped young persons is essential and as the author stated, they must feel free to attempt whatever task or hobby they wish, even if it is only going to town and visiting a café or the cinema and coming home when they feel ready, gives them the feeling of independence and of being grown up and the same as everyone else.

Yours sincerely, Chas. P. D. Greenhill,
20 North Kilmeny Crescent, Wishaw,
Lanarkshire, Scotland.

AN OLDER SPASTIC WRITES

Dear Editor,

I read with great interest the article in February SPASTICS NEWS 'When School has finished'. I agree with her views. There is no point in caring for any disabled child or young person, if, at a later stage after-care is not given. For, at the point when most help is needed, it seems to be not there.

The children and parents need and get help by groups or The Spastics Society. But the older spastics who cannot benefit from school or workshop are left to do the best they can—it is not much help hearing it said and reading 'When we have enough L.s.d. the older ones will benefit'. The older ones will by then have gone for a halo and wings. Surely some part of the funds could be used now to make some of us old ones feel we, at least, are still some good.

I am 52 years of age and live with my father who is 81. He has long since given over worrying about me and just does not think about things as he is very active and healthy.

I would like to have a 'phone installed, but, of course, cannot afford the rent out of my allowance (couldn't a grant be given?).

(Continued overleaf)



SWORDS AND SPURS AT PARK CRESCENT: It was a colourful scene when a cheque for £117 was handed over by Lt. Christopher Seal and Nurse Carol Lowe to Anita Alvarez from Ponds Home. It was the proceeds from the challenge walk between Nurses of Highfields Hospital and the Guards from Brighton to London. (L. to R.), Cpl. Michael Sloane, R.H.G., Judith Rowland, Cpl. Barry Idle, R.H.G., Nurse Marina Porcou, Tpr. Neil Hanson, L.G., Nurse Rosemary Radford, Cpl. Andrew Ryme, Mr. James Loring, Anita Alvarez, Lt. C. A. Seal, L.G., Trooper John Thomson, Nurse Judy Ford, Nurse Sue Earland, Cpl. Barry Davies and Cpl. Major G. Humphries, R.H.G.

Letters to the Editor (Cont'd)

I am trying to save a little as, at a later date, if I have to live alone, some form of heating other than coal will have to be used, as I cannot carry, or clean the fire-place.

So, it seems to me that quite small amounts of money could help a great deal to give the old spastics and any disabled person the extra help in other than their home, when they need it, not in a few years, but now!

'Tomorrow never comes' they say, which is very true; and for all disabled persons, more so.

Yours sincerely, M. RIGBY (Miss).

Believe me, Miss Rigby, much thought is given to the possible plight of the older spastic, but it is a difficult problem where no one solution is possible for all.—

EDITOR.

LIBERTY AND LIFE

Dear Editor,

As one who hopes to enter a Spastics Home I would like to refer to the following points in the article, 'When School Has Finished'.

I feel that (a) one's own room, and (b) freedom of bedtime, are desirable.

There must be others like myself who are physically unable to do hard or sustained work. For these the answer would seem to be occupational therapy once or

twice a week, with liberty to follow one's own pursuits the rest of the time.

No-one would wish to be alone all the time, and this could be avoided by having a common lounge.

I fully realise that these conditions may be impracticable for a variety of reasons; e.g. a house which is not purpose-built would have insufficient single rooms, inability to look after oneself would necessitate earlier hours, and lack of initiative

might make set employment desirable. As time goes on we may be able to have more purpose-built homes and become more segregated.

Yours sincerely, MURIEL DELL (Miss),
108 Whitaker Road, Derby.

TOO WELL CARED FOR

Dear Editor,

I was interested to read the views of the Swedish physiotherapist whose article was published, in the February issue of SPASTICS NEWS, under the title, 'When School Has Finished.' I am in full agreement with her.

It is most important, that any handicapped person who unfortunately has to go into a 'home', should be allowed as much responsibility, freedom, and independence as possible.

A few years ago, I spent a week's holiday in a home for the handicapped (not, I hasten to add one run by The Spastics Society), it was an experience I have no desire to repeat. Later when I considered why this 'home' was so depressing, I realised it was because the handicapped people who 'lived' there had lost their independence. They were too well cared for by the very well meaning, but rather misguided, nursing staff. Thus they had lost the incentive and initiative, to think, or do things for themselves. They seemed to me like displaced persons who had lost their roots.

If a handicapped person was allowed his own room, and his own possessions in a home, this would help him to re-



A resident of the County Spastics Centre, Scunthorpe, made one of the draws at a raffle at the Centre, when there were over 100 prizes. Members of the public were present for the draw, and were afterwards shown round by the Warden, Mr. Hazelton

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

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CUT OUT and send to:

THE EDITOR, SPASTICS NEWS, 12 Park Crescent, London, W.1

establish his 'roots' and retain independence.

Yours sincerely, ELIZABETH EWART (Miss), 2 Longlands, Hexham, Northumberland.

OUT AND ABOUT

Dear Editor,

I am asking my mother to write this for me, as I have lent my typewriter to a handicapped person in Yeovil who needs it more than I do, until he can get one of his own.

I thought you might like to hear about some of my Christmas activities, I went to three parties in Taunton, one party in Yeovil, the Spastic one, and a party at the Sunday School, where my sister and mother teach; the little children enjoy riding round on my chair, one little girl had been in a bad car crash, and was getting used to crutches, she was glad of my help, we had our picture in the paper, taken with the others and Father Christmas.

Last Saturday I went to get a record off our Somerset 'Pop' Group, the one called Adeg Outler, autographed them. I was the first in the queue so had my picture taken with him for the press, he gave me a signed photograph of the group.

One treat I had was when my brother came and fetched me to go to Chard to see a Nativity Pageant at the Church where he was married in August, his wife was Mary, and she looked very nice, she had a real baby in the crib, but he didn't cry, I nursed the baby after, just to say I had nursed the 'star' of the show.

Last Sunday afternoon, I went to Wells Cathedral, it was a glorious day and the sun was shining, the hazel catkins were all out and looked lovely.

Perhaps you may think this is not very important,* but you see I am a badly handicapped spastic, everywhere I go I take my special cup, and, of course, the bottle tucked away in a little bag, just in case I drink too much tea or laugh too much, we have no car or trains now, and I have to depend on kind drivers with big boots to their cars for my wheelchair, so I don't reckon I did so bad, do you?

Yours sincerely, DAVID WASTNIDGE (22 years old), 11 Eastover, Langport, Som.

**It is always important to us to hear of spastics who get out and about and enjoy life, like you do, David.—EDITOR.*

50—AND STILL GOING STRONG

Dear Editor,

Since the New Year, I have started taking SPASTICS NEWS, which I enjoy reading very much indeed. It is nice to hear of all the good work being done for spastics like myself, both in this country and elsewhere these days.

In my younger days, there was never

CHARTERED PHYSIOTHERAPIST

Required to join a team of three other Therapists as well as Speech-therapists, Teachers and House-parents in working with severely handicapped cerebral palsied children. Whitley salary scales, plus £80 increment after completing a year of satisfactory service. Opportunities to attend relevant conferences and courses. School holidays.

Apply to:

THE HEADMISTRESS,
Ingfield Manor School,
Five Oaks, BILLINGSHURST,
Sussex.

much done for us; I had only two years schooling but thanks to mother and many kind friends' help in the past, I have been very lucky in many ways and able to get about quite a lot, with the aid of a stick. My one regret—I am not able to go out to work but I do help with housework. I am now living with my sister, since mother's death some years ago.

I did belong to the Birmingham Branch but now we have one in Herefordshire, which is coming along very well at the moment, after two years. We had a very happy time at our Christmas party on December 17th, I am sure we shall remember it for a long time. At this point, may I say a word of thanks to the Arun-

del Hotel staff for the grand time they gave us over Christmas. It was nice to see so many smiling faces; it did one's heart good and made me feel proud of all such people.

We had already spent a most enjoyable holiday with another party last May and I am pleased to say we are still hearing from some of the friends we made.

I am now in my 50th year and pleased to say I have enjoyed life to the full, in spite of being a spastic.

Wishing the Society every success in the future.

I remain, yours sincerely, MARGERY PESTRIDGE (Miss), 'Iona', 33 New Street, Ledbury, Herefordshire.

WHO IS THE OLDEST SPASTIC?

Dear Editor,

Thank you first of all for your prompt reply to my letter, which has eased my mind quite a lot.

I should also be interested to know who is the oldest spastic on your books? There must be a few older ones now, since the Society started in 1953.

Another query—why is the SPASTICS NEWS not a national? Can you enlighten me.

Sorry to send so many questions, but it is a matter of interest to me and my other friends about the country.

Yours sincerely, JOHN PUDNEY, Angers House, 2 Church Road, Liverpool 15.

'Spastics News' circulates throughout the U.K. and abroad, Mr. Pudney.

—Editor.



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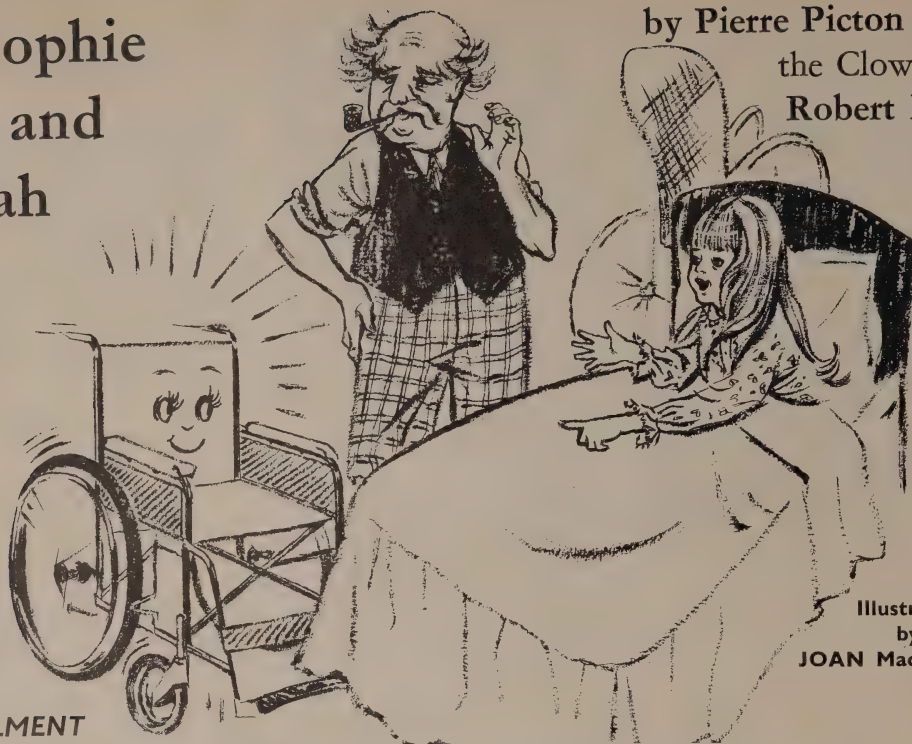
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Sophie and Sarah

by Pierre Picton (Pierre
the Clown) and
Robert Martin



THE FIRST INSTALMENT

Illustrated
by
JOAN MacDONALD

'Ooh!' cried Sophie waking up and seeing her new magic chair, 'Good morning, Sarah'

HOW THEY MET

SOPHIE DID NOT HAVE a mummy or daddy, but she did have her Uncle Joe and Auntie Flo, and they all were very, very happy together.

Uncle Joe was very clever at making things, and at making magic, too. So when Sophie wanted to visit her friends, Uncle Joe said: 'You can't go in that old chair. A silly old chair, that is! I will make you a really wonderful magic chair'.

Uncle Joe always kept his promises. He went to his workshop and worked day and night at making the chair, while Sophie dreamed of the wonderful things she would do in it. She even gave it a name—Sarah.

Then one morning Sophie woke up to see the chair standing beside her bed.

'Ooh!' cried Sophie. 'Good morning, Sarah!'

'Good morning, Sophie!' said the chair, not at all surprised at hearing her name.

'You are wonderful', said Sophie. 'Such a wonderful chair. I've waited a long time for you to come. Such a long time that I've dreamed of all the things we're going to do together'.

'Now that's very strange', Sarah answered. 'Because so have I'.

They had not been surprised that they could talk to each other like this. It was all quite as they both had dreamed.

'There isn't *anything* you cannot do', said Sophie.

'And there isn't *anything* you cannot do', said Sarah.

'Between us we can do *anything*', they sang together on that happy first meeting. And since that moment, they had never been apart. When Sophie went to bed, Sarah slept in a corner of the bedroom.

When Sophie sat at breakfast on Timmy, the rather thin, nobbly little chair, Sarah stood quietly waiting. She was rather strict with poor Timmy.

'Don't move so fast', Sarah would say, tapping Timmy with her wheels. Or: 'Where's your cushion?'

And Timmy would mutter: 'Bighead! who does she think she is? Ouch!' He'd squeak his legs on the floor as Sarah bumped him in the back.

When they were alone, Sophie said: 'You mustn't bully poor Timmy. He does his best you know'.

Sarah sighed. 'Yes, I know he does, but he's such an old stick. I mean—what can he *do*? He just sits there, all square and nobbly. And he's got such silly legs'.

This sort of talk happened when they were very young together. When Sophie wasn't quite sure just what things Sarah could do. And Sarah, being a very well-made chair, didn't want her lovely young friend to try to do too many things when they were 'out together. But now Sarah said to Sophie:

'You can do anything in me. Anything you *want* to do'.

Sophie closed her eyes, held on to Sarah's arms and said: 'I want to go down the High Street zoom-zoom!'

'Zoom-zoom it is!' said Sarah. 'Hold my arms tightly!'

They went more than zoom-zoom. They went zim and zam in and out of the people walking past the shops. Zoom-zim and zam-zoom—whoosh!

The sun shone bright, the breeze blew on Sophie's face, making her cheeks glow red. Her eyes were blue-sparkling like diamonds, her golden hair flowing over



Sophie and Sarah went zooming down the High Street . . .

Sarah's back like feather-gold floating.

The people stopped and stared.

'Why— isn't that Sophie? Goodness me— what a speed, and how safe she looks in that wonderful chair!'

'Not a word about how clever Sarah was. But Sarah didn't mind. This was their secret. Sophie's and hers.'

Near where the High Street climbed up a hill the rows of parking meters began, so Sophie told Sarah to go more slowly. The meters were on the side of the pavement so it wasn't safe to go very fast. And there were more people here, and the car bumpers stuck out over the kerb.

This was how they met Peter Meter. Tall and thin, with a little white face that had a habit of covering itself yellow or red.

Sarah turned very sharply to miss hitting a little dog and ran—ker-plonk—into Peter.

'Ooh! Then: 'Tick, buzz, tinkle—boing!' said Peter.

'Oh dear!' said Sophie. 'Now look what we've done! It's knocked sideways. What will the Warden say?'

'It?' said Sarah. 'It? you are nice, but that is not nice. How would you like to be called "it"?'

Sophie was amazed at these sharp words coming from deep down inside Sarah. She was even more amazed when Peter said:

'Thank you very much. You are very kind—and very beautiful. Of course I am a "he" not an "it".'

Sarah blushed hot. So much that Sophie wriggled and said:

'Must you do that? It's very warm for me. How did I know it—er—he was a he?'

'Ooh!' Peter whirred. 'I'm going! I can feel myself going!'

There came a loud whirr and a click, and suddenly his face was all yellow.

Next instalment next month.



With a loud click and a whirr Peter the meter's face went all yellow

Some More Household Hints

by ANN PEARCE

1. Perhaps you find brushing your teeth twice daily difficult for some reason. There are some tablets called 'Dentabs' which you suck to clean your teeth. I believe you obtain 'Dentabs' from Boots.

2. When giving people money in a hurry it is sometimes easier to handle a note rather than coins. Especially when travelling. A situation in which you have only a certain amount of time.

3. 'Notelets' for sending letters are useful. Having the fold already in the card, is easier than trying to make a neat crease in the note paper yourself. Besides the 'Notelett' card slides into the envelope without force.

4. Instead of asking people to write addresses into a book in their best handwriting. I type addresses out onto small economy labels. Then stick them into the book.

5. I 'Rug Make' and I have difficulty in threading the needle, though. I have now overcome this, by using a thin piece of metal in the shape of a hook. The top of it has to be very thin to be pushed through the eye of the rug needle.

6. Wool socks are much easier to pull on and off than nylon socks. The tops of wool socks stretch and both hands can tug at the sock.

7. Buttons are a problem. I try to avoid buttons by having blouses and jumpers that don't require doing up. Also slacks and skirts with elastic tops.

8. Undoing sweet papers isn't easy, but you can hold one end of the sweet paper with your good hand and hold the other end with your teeth.

9. My uncle made me a correspondence rack. The 'Notelets', envelopes, papers and cards all stand upright in this rack. I can take what I require out of the rack without creasing and marking the papers, etc.

10. Spelling words to make yourself understood sometimes helps the listener as well as yourself.

the Stars in their Courses . .

News of the
STARS ORGANISATION
FOR SPASTICS

collected by
'THE CALLBOY'

STOP PRESS

THE MUSIC OF WALT DISNEY:
a new L.P.—lasting for 45 mins.—of hits
from Disney pictures is being issued at
only £1. Half the proceeds are generously
being donated to The Spastics Society.
More about this great gesture next
month.

I met Joan Regan recently at the Plough and Harrow, Rushey Green, where she knocked over a beacon at very short notice. The landlord and his wife were leaving the pub that evening and therefore there was a very special party organised. Joan wished them every success with their new newspaper and stationery shop which they were moving to in Kent.

I had to leave Joan Regan at the pub to make my way to the Queen's Head in Theobalds Road, where Jimmy Edwards was expected to knock over a pile of pennies. He came straight from the theatre. He told me that his show is doing very well and that Roy Castle had started rehearsing the part which he was taking over from Eric Sykes.

Sylvia Syms took the Swan Inn at Harefield by storm when she arrived wearing a trouser suit made of black crocheted wool lined with emerald green silk. She was there to knock over a pile of pennies which brought the total amount collected by this house to £150 9s. 5d.

David Jacobs, on the first Thursday in February, knocked over a pile of pennies at the Queen's Arms, S.W.8. Once again the landlord and his wife were leaving this house to move to another one in Middlesex, and it therefore made this the occasion for a special party. David stayed for about half-an-hour and then continued on to another function at the Chelsea Town Hall.

FORTHCOMING EVENT

Change of Date for the Record Star Show

The S.O.S. annual Record Star Show will now take place on Sunday, 16th April, 1967. There will be two houses at 2 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. Tickets are available at the Box Office, Empire Pool, Wembley. Some of the artists who will be appearing are as follows and further names will be given in the next issue:—

Cliff Bennett and The Rebel Rousers.
Dave Berry.
Chris Farlow and The Thunderbirds.
Freddie and The Dreamers.
Paul Jones.
Lulu.
The Move.
The Tremeloes.
Geno Washington and The Ram Jam Band.

BEACONS GO FOR A BURTON —and the customers do too!



(Picture by James Ascough, Burnham-on-Sea)

Sally Alford, the well-known T.W.W. personality, with Mrs. Whitcombe, the landlady of the Red Lion, Axbridge, and Mr. Peter Pope, the West R.O., knocking over a pile of pennies on the 27th January, which amounted to £45 1s. 0d. bringing the total amount raised by this house to £190. Hidden behind the beacon is Mr. Harill a member of the Western and District Society for the Spastic and Mentally Handicapped



Jean Aubrey with the Mayor of Gillingham, Mr. Webb, joint landlord with Mr. and Mrs. Curtis and the Mayoress. The sum of £34 17s. 8d. was collected on the beacon and in addition an auction was held during the course of the evening which raised over £60, which is to be given to local spastics

BOURNEMOUTH, POOLE AND DISTRICT HAVE A CARAVAN

For 5 gns. per week a family with a spastic can enjoy a holiday in the lovely Pilgrim's Park, Thorness Bay, on the Isle of Wight, in a well-equipped 20ft long caravan. There is every conceivable amenity in the Park such as a launderette, free hot and cold showers, dances and cinema. Fresh and frozen foods, milk, etc., are obtainable from a self-service store.

Only four miles from Cowes, the Island is reached by regular crossings from Portsmouth or Lymington in half-an-hour.

At present there are vacancies in May, June, July and from August 26th onwards.

Please write for bookings to:—

The Social Secretary,
Mrs. W. Stephenson,
161 Queen's Park Avenue,
Bournemouth, Hants.



(Courtesy: Southend Standard)

TIME FOR ALL GOOD DALEKS TO COME TO THE AID OF THE PARTY: More than 50 children received presents from Father Christmas at Southend Spastic Society's annual children's party in December, at St. Mary's Hall, Victoria Avenue. The party was for the Junior Section aged up to 10 years, and after tea there was a puppet show

EMPLOYMENT NEWS

The following news has been received recently:—

SIDNEY BULLEN from Forest Hill has changed his job and is now working as a trainee in a firm of spectacle manufacturers.

MICHAEL CULLUM from Southampton, is working for a local firm of philatelists where he is employed on the re-filling of stock books, and other duties.

BARRY DONLON from Glossop, who trained at Sherrards is working as an engraver for Plastic Formers Ltd.

ARTHUR FURNELL from Southampton, is working at the R.S.P.C.A. Kennels.

RAYMOND GILBERT from Comberton, is employed as a market cleaner by the Cambridge Corporation.

EDWINA HIRST from Leeds, is working as an office junior for a firm in Braham.

CAROL HORSCHRAFT from Stoke Newington, who trained at Sherrards, is doing light assembly work for a firm in Dalston Lane.

JEAN OWEN from Waunfawr, has been working for some time as an apprentice bookbinder for a firm of printers.

NUALLA O'FARRELL from Halifax, recently commenced a trial period of employment in domestic work.

MICHAEL O'LOUGHLIN from Tooting, has changed his job and is now working again at the local hospital.

ANGELA RODDA from Redruth, who trained at Sherrards, is now employed locally on light assembly work at Messrs. Rank Bush Murphy.

TERENCE SMITH from Bromley, has changed his job and is now working in Lewisham. He uses a hand-operated machine for punching holes in perambulator handles.

JOYCE WAITE from Scunthorpe, who trained at Sherrards, is doing light assembly work for A.E.I. in Lincoln.

OXFORD SPASTICS HOPE CHEST

WE MUST APOLOGISE for attributing this article to Mr. Cowen. Mr. Cowen has written several amusing articles for us, but in this case 'Thank goodness for a Sense of Humour' was sent in by Miss Joyce Kent of Cowley, Oxford.

BILLIARDS AND SNOOKER ● ● ●

MARCH

1st	Wragby Road, Social Club, 272 Wragby Road, Lincoln	J. Rea
1st	Seaford Constitutional Club, Church Lane, Seaford, Sussex	K. Kennerley
2nd	Hawthorne Workmen's Club, Cantley, Doncaster	J. Rea
3rd	East Hull Liberal Club, 102 Coltman Street, Hull	J. Rea
6th	Crickhowell Unionist, High Street, Crickhowell, Brecs.	J. Rea
7th	British Legion, Pontardulais, Swansea, S. Wales	J. Rea
8th	Tonypandy Cons. Club, 32 Berw Road, Tonypandy, Rhondda	J. Rea
9th	Electricity Welfare Club, rear Sandy Road, Llanelly, Carmar.	J. Rea
10th	Unity Services Club, Wind Street, Aberdare, Glam.	J. Rea
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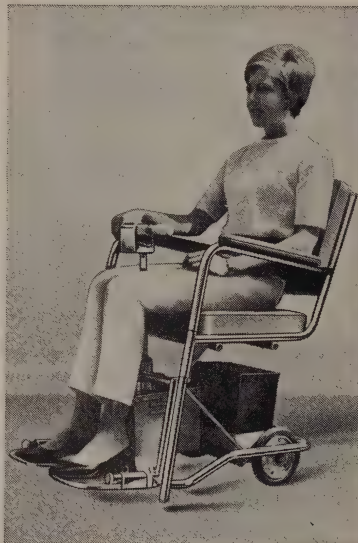
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Front-Line Manoeuvres

Shirley Keene is
at it again!

ILLUSTRATION BY HUGH CRACE

'THE BUILDERS FINISH on the 21st and the furniture will be delivered from the 24th,' said the boss, 'go down there and sleep in a nearby hotel, till the beds arrive and then move in'. So I packed; sheets, coffee pot, frying pan, bed lamp, transistor, hammer, screwdriver, knife, slacks, sweaters and long underwear. (If you think this sounds like camping, you're right.)

And when I got there it was utter chaos! There were seven to ten workmen there (they kept moving about and were hard to count) and there were ladders and festoons of wire and floor boards up all over the place and wet paint and no water or electricity or telephone. The foreman said, 'We would have been finished but they ordered those extra bells'. I looked at all the painting and carpentry and plumbing and plastering and tile laying still to be done and I didn't call him a liar because he was bigger than I was.

That week really was awful. There was no heat at all and vast numbers of wardrobes, lounge chairs and beds were delivered to be parked, higgledy-piggledy, in any downstairs room which was not too workman-infested. The workmen didn't speak to me for I think they felt I was spying, and no one talked to me at the hotel where I stayed at night. I went to bed straight after supper for being cold made me so tired.

The telephone people did the outside wiring that week but there was no sign or news of the 'phone itself.

I carted a little electric heater down from London the next week, so it wasn't quite so cold. (It was loaned from H.Q.

switched off and defrosted. It really was a pest having to defreeze the milk each time.

The workmen really got a move on that week and I was able to move in the following Monday. Still no 'phone, no floor coverings, no curtains and precious little heat for the new electrical installations hadn't been inspected by The Board and were functioning on about four possum-power fuses which blew if you put on more than two heaters at once.

My blood pressure soared on arrival when I found the cooker oven turned on low and somebody's boots drying in it. Still they did bring a bed and a chest upstairs for me. I plugged in my bed lamp, made up my bed and spread newspapers beside it on the mucky bare boards. I didn't have enough blankets so had to leave the heater on all night.

Next day the workmen had left (no, the house was nowhere near finished) except for one apprentice plasterer with nothing to do, so he trailed me round and talked to me while I cleaned all the baths and w.c.s. Then he faded out and that was that.

I got sundry memoranda from H.Q. which said 'Do this', 'Arrange that', and I would put on my boots and coat and tie my head-scarf on and splash down the hill in the rain to the 'phone. It was an s.t.d. one, the Postmaster's answer to a fruit-machine and a thoroughly anti-athetoid contraption. Almost in spite of it, I got through to British Rail who said they'd come (they didn't), British Rail Services who said they'd come (they didn't), the 'fridge people who said they'd come (they didn't). I also made a number of despairing 'phone calls about the lack

of heating and a 'phone and was always told that someone would come and fix things (they didn't).

And, oh, it felt isolated there at night, with the wind prowling round the house, rattling the doors and windows and trying to get in. The unexpected noises weren't quite so bad when I actually got into bed. I mainly heard the stealthy footsteps down below and on the stairs, when I was in the bath and even more unprotected.

Mind you, a few people did turn up and trailed round the house. They would turn up their collars and say, 'It IS cold here. I don't know how you stand it!' and go away as quickly as possible. One day a huge contingent came; architects, welfare authorities, fire officers, the lot. They went round saying 'important things to each other and switching all the lights on and ringing all the bells. They said it was nice to see me and when they'd gone I found all the lights on the first floor were fused. Thank goodness for my bed lamp. I didn't have to go to bed by braille.

When I came back after the next weekend, I found that somehow, someone had delivered a monster dishwashing machine and dumped it just inside the kitchen door. It was difficult to get in and out and impossible to get near the 'fridge. It had to be moved. I took off my coat, spat on my hands and got my shoulder to it. It weighed about a ton but I got it moving at last. As I stopped for a breather, I thought wistfully of the H.Q. lot who move furniture by writing a carefully phrased internal memorandum. Very slowly I eased the brute into the corner, out of the way.

That's the way things stayed for the rest of my time there. The crockery, cutlery, the kitchen equipment and the linen all turned to be uncrated and checked. I didn't mind the dirt so much as the cold. It seeped in round doors and windows and crept up through the bare floorboards and lay in wait for me in the empty halls and stairways.

I had nearly six weeks there and the whole operation felt rather like banging your head against a wall. It was wonderful when it was over!

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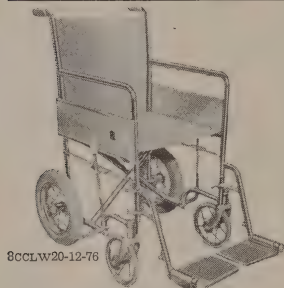
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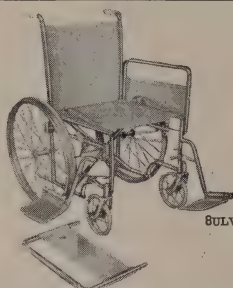
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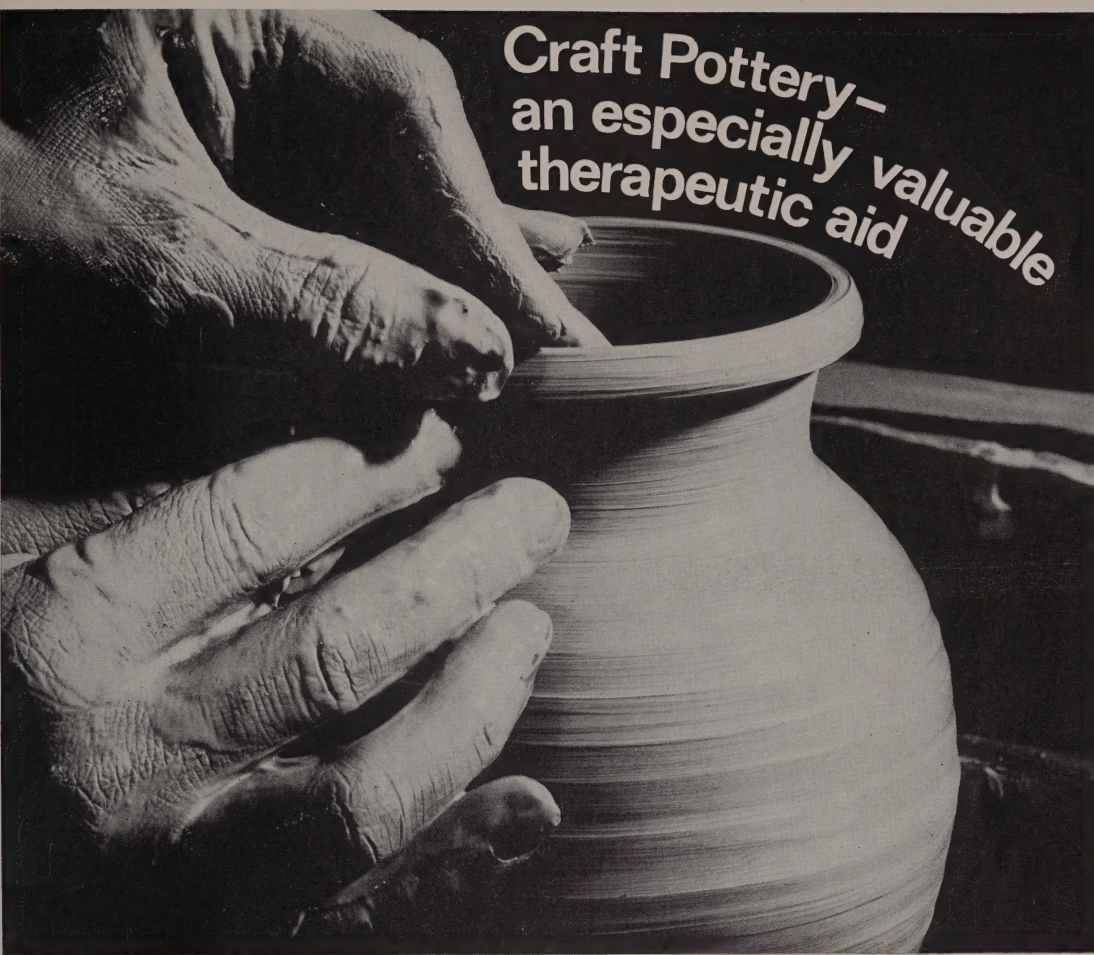
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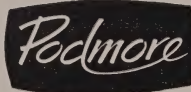


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